

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of the claims in the above-referenced application.

1-10. (cancelled)

11. (currently amended) A gaming method comprising:

selecting and displaying a combination of symbols in a matrix of M rows and N columns, selected symbols including at least one special symbol and other symbols, the matrix having multiple pay lines across the N columns; and

when the special symbol is displayed in a particular column, converting other symbols in the same particular column to be identical to the special symbol, wherein the identical special symbols in the particular column are in different pay lines converting at least one of said other symbols to at least one different symbol due to said at least one special symbol being selected for said matrix, wherein said special symbol is selected for a position in a row and column in said matrix, and wherein said converting comprises converting all symbols adjoining said special symbol on multiple pay lines to special symbols identical to said special symbol but not converting any symbols not adjoining said special symbol.

12. (cancelled)

13. (currently amended) The method of Claim + 11 wherein said converting comprises converting a visual image of ~~initially selected~~ symbols to ~~a converted~~ the special symbol.

14. (currently amended) The method of Claim + 11 wherein said special symbol is a wild card ~~which represents a symbol of a highest value across a pay line.~~

15. (currently amended) The method of Claim + 11 further comprising

determining, after said converting, whether symbols in said matrix include a winning combination of symbols by determining symbols across at least one pay line.

16. (previously presented) The method of Claim 11 wherein said multiple pay lines comprises horizontal pay lines.

17. (previously presented) The method of Claim 16 wherein said multiple pay lines further comprise bent pay lines.

18-32. (cancelled)

33. (currently amended) A gaming device comprising:
a display device; and

control circuitry for controlling said display device, said control circuitry being configured for controlling said display device to display a combination of selected symbols in a matrix of M rows and N columns, the matrix having multiple pay lines across the N columns, selected symbols in said matrix including at least one special symbol and other symbols, and for controlling said display device such that, when the special symbol is displayed in a particular column, other symbols in the same particular column are converted to be identical to the special symbol, wherein the identical special symbols in the particular column are in different pay lines to convert at least one of said other symbols to at least one different symbol due to said at least one special symbol being selected for said matrix

wherein said special symbol is selected for a position in a row and column in said matrix, and wherein said control circuitry controls said display device to convert symbols all adjoining said special symbol on multiple pay lines to special symbols identical to said special symbol but not converting any symbols not adjoining said special symbol.

34. (cancelled)

35. (currently amended) The device of Claim 24 ~~33~~ wherein said special symbol

is a wild card which represents a symbol of a highest value across a pay line.

36. (currently amended) The device of Claim 24 33 further comprising a payout table for determining, after conversion of said symbols, whether symbols in said matrix include a winning combination of symbols across at least one pay line.

37. (previously presented) The device of Claim 33 wherein said multiple pay lines comprises horizontal pay lines.

38. (previously presented) The device of Claim 37 wherein said multiple pay lines further comprise bent pay lines.

39-44. (cancelled)